1533

Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."

JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

Comrade Bailie's article in this issue on "Ireland's Need of a Free Currency" is suggestive. It certainly is none too early to begin to prepare that unhappy country to make the most of her freedom when she shall get it. The Irishman or Irish-American who devotes himself to that work will do his country immeasurable service. But Ireland's situation is peculiar. Unlike all other civilized nations, her first and greatest need is free land, not free money. In America free land would do but little good unless preceded by free money. In Ireland it is just the reverse. There free money could do little unless preceded by free land. But Ireland, once her land is free, will offer a splendid opportunity for the introduction of free money. With no powerfully-entrenched financial interests to offer innumerable obstacles, freedom of banking would have a clear field and a fair trial. Let us hope, yes, let us work that the light may so spread in Erin that, when the opportunity comes, the intelligence and will to seize it shall not be lacking.

Another monopoly is threatened. At present, as is well known, Wagner's "Parsifal" can be performed only at Bayreuth. This music-drama is Madame Wagner's property, and she refuses to allow any one else to produce it. But in Austria, it seems, every copyrighted work becomes free ten years after the author's death. Next year, therefore, "Parsifal" can be performed in Austria by any one who chooses. Madame Wagner is moving heaven and earth to secure the passage of a new law in Austria in the interest of her monopoly, and it is said that she may succeed. If she does, then Austrians, like Frenchmen, Englishmen, Americans, and the people of all other nations who have chosen to make slaves of themselves, must continue to pay tribute, not only to Madame Wagner, but to hotel-keepers and railroad corporations, if they desire to witness a representation of the greatest achievement in musical composition yet attained. This situation illustrates another absurdity of property in ideas, to which attention has never been called in these columns. As long as Madame Wagner is allowed to retain her monopoly, — and really, if it is rightfully her property, it ought never to be taken from her, — the price which a man must pay to see "Parsifal" is proportionate to the distance between his residence and Bayreuth. The citizen of Bayreuth pays but five dollars for the privilege which must cost a citizen of the United States from two to four hundred dollars. And this because of one woman's will and the rest of the world's lack of will. It may be replied, of course, that the same situation exists regarding many works of art and nature, and cannot be avoided, — for instance, a painting by Titian or the falls of Niagara. This is unfortunately true; but the only good reason for putting up with such a state of things is that we cannot help ourselves. We pay heavily to see Niagara Falls because we cannot reproduce Niagara Falls within walking distance of our homes. But is the fact that we must pay more for things we cannot duplicate a good reason for paying more for things that can be duplicated?

Some months ago, in a paragraph relating to Whitman, I expressed the opinion that the poet regretted his lines in laudation of the old Emperor William, which Liberty so severely condemned at the time of their appearance. Afterwards J. Wm. Lloyd told me that my surmise was probably incorrect, as the lines were not suppressed in the later editions of the poet's works. My friend Horace L. Traubel, Whitman's literary executor, in a recent conversation with me, confirmed Mr. Lloyd's view. Be it so, then; so much the worse for Whitman. Not being allowed to forget the disgraceful lines, we must consider them an indelible stain upon a great life-work. "William and Tucker didn't understand me," said Whitman, as reported by Mr. Traubel. (The William referred to is not the Emperor, but William D. O'Connor, the poet's stanchest champion and warmest admirer, who was as indignant as I over the lines in question.) So Mr. Traubel explained to me Whitman's attitude. The explanations were two. First, Whitman was able to include William in his song, because the poet's philosophy was broad enough to include even the greatest criminal. Second, Whitman believed that the unification of Germany was a great and good work, just as he believed in the unification of these States, not in admiration of political government, but on the ground of comradeship. The first thing to note about these explanations is that they are none too consistent with each other. It is not likely that in four lines of verse Whitman meant to celebrate the Emperor's work and at the same time to offer him his hand in brotherhood as he would offer it to a criminal. But this point need not be dwelt on, since the language of the poem is distinctly at variance with either explanation. The gospel of comradeship, however inclusive it may be, is something more and worse than inclusive when it describes the criminal in power — that is, the tyrant — as a "faithful shepherd of his people." Nor does such language properly apply to any ruler who, whatever advantages may have resulted from his administration, was to "his people," not a shepherd, but an outrageous oppressor. For myself I consider the unification of Germany an evil of itself, no more promoting comradeship than marriage does, but this is a point on which decent men may differ. On the other hand, it is impossible for lovers of liberty to differ as to the infamous character of the Bismarckian *régime*. No, the thing cannot be explained. One must say of such explanations as Colonel Ingersoll says of the Christian endeavor to harmonize the Bible with science: "'Twont do."

Victor Rehabilitated.

To the Editor of Liberty:

It seems to me that Emma Heller was a little harsh to Victor in saying that he considers every man illiterate who has not read Herbert Spencer. I fully agree that Victor is a bookworm, but at the same time I know something else of Victor, which nobody can deny. Last year there appeared an article by Victor, in which he criticised the "People" for saying that Pentecost, having begun to practice law, has no longer a right to attack the ruling classes in behalf of the oppressed. And Victor, among other things, said that he appreciates every well-sustained argument, though it be uttered by the lowest prostitute. Does not this disprove Emma Heller's statement? Respectfully yours,

H. RABINOVITCH.

[Victor? Who is Victor, anyhow? Has my good correspondent any private information concerning David Copperfield or Robinson Crusoe? I beg him to observe that Emma Heller is a writer of fiction. — EDITOR LIBERTY.]

Tom's Soliloquy. — I.

I want to do Jim good, make him like me,
He wants to do me good, make me like him,
The fool! I know I'm right, and yet you see
He's sure I'm wrong, is Jim.

But though I'm tired, I'll get his worthless sowl
Saved yet, the holy terror that he is;
Not that I care for Jim, his ugly scowl
Would shock a saint in bliss.

There's privileges comes to faithful zeal;
It's them I'm after, and in no ways Jim;
I've saved a-many, set on them Christ's seal;
I'll not be done by him.

Jim's Soliloquy. — II.

Tom's an infernal scamp, a hypocrite,
With his old rotten cant about the Word,
His sly look sideways through his fat lids slit,
His jaw when I am bored.

I bide my time, but when he's had his say,
I'll serve the Bible up and make him ill;
Such blasphemies I'll speak to him to-day
As shall his fervor kill.

Not that I care in any sort for Tom,
But I will spoil his trim religious mug.
O ho! my parson friend, I've such a bomb
For you, old meek! old smug!

Miriam Daniell.

Liberty.

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel."—PROUDHON.

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Ireland's Need of a Free Currency.

At all periods of human history it is possible to observe a combination of times and conditions that seems conspicuously ripe for the recognition and adoption of certain instalments of general truth embodied in particular ideas and principles borne mostly on the obscure banners of hitherto unnoticed reform. Such an occasion, I venture to believe, is presented by the dawning hopes to which the impending political change gives birth in the state of long-scourged and ever-suffering Ireland.

The economic regeneration of that country through the death of Interest by means of a free currency is the idea which the writer believes peculiarly fitting at this juncture of her career to inaugurate the industrial and social Revolution.

A glance at the circumstances upon which this assumption is based cannot fail to interest all students of the economics of Anarchism, besides furnishing the reasons for offering this suggestion to Liberty. Ireland's industrial position to-day is that of a people whose commercial prospects and productive efforts have been effectually blighted and crushed out by the foreign aggressor and reduced to dependence on an impoverished and miserable agriculture under the worst agrarian system that was ever imposed by the invasive brutality of tyrannical government upon an unwilling but powerless community. Political self-government, the dream of centuries, is almost within their grasp. Alas! that the hopes of ages should be centred upon so deceptive a consummation! Yet it is not the mere expedient of Home Rule to which they pin their faith. It is a reformed land system, the opening up of manufactures and a new commerce, the revival of industry, the growth of trade and exchange, and the building up of a new era of general prosperity, which are anticipated as the fruits of the political change, that render the Irish people hopeful and confident.

Doubtless a partial realization of these expectations will ensue. But in what way and with what results? The system of land tenure may be reformed and agriculture improve; probably attempts will be made with more or less success to create and build up new industries and establish international commerce; the abundant and not high-priced labor, together with the exceptional natural facilities which the country offers for conducting a variety of industrial enterprises, will assure determined efforts for their establishment, and a consequent demand for capital; but this demand cannot be met except by the same classes who have in the past combined with the needy landlords to tighten the screw on the over-burdened peasant. For money-capital is notoriously scarce in Ireland: hence a market for English capitalists and London usurers will be one of the first fruits of Home Rule, of which they will not fail to take advantage, and in the name of Interest the bloodsuckers will despoil labor and seize the lion's share of the product with as much security under an Irish Parliament as was ever possible in the palmy days of the tyrant Balfour. That the industry, intelligence, and talents of the Irish people will be turned in the direction indicated there can hardly be a question. For it is only the incessant struggle against alien oppression along with the creation of impossible conditions of growth and prosperity by British commercial jealousy and power which have reduced the people to their present backward state.

With regard to the proposed schemes of self-government, the question of the new Parliament issuing a paper currency to supply the internal circulating medium has been discussed with favor both by English statesmen favorable to Home Rule and by Irish politicians. Probably a species of fiat money under certain limitations is the prevailing notion. Something in that direction is likely to accompany the Gladstonian plan. Banks in Ireland at present issue notes which form the greater part of the currency. They are based of course on gold; about two-thirds, I think, is the reserve which the banks are supposed to hold against their paper in circulation. A national paper currency is spoken of to replace this privilege.

As a people the Irish are by no means favorable to Usury. They are hereditary and inveterate foes to its own brother, Rent. They would be as easily aroused against the former as they have always been against the latter. Is there not in these circumstances a remarkably favorable field for the propagation of Mutual Banking as a practical plan for the realization of Ireland's dream? There is now a large surplus of agricultural products over the home consumption. Her peculiar position compels her to export this surplus without receiving equivalent values in return. The rise of an industrial and commercial class would absorb this abundant produce and also offer an equitable return. Therefore, neither raw material nor real wages—*i.e.*, the necessaries of life—are wanting; nothing but a medium of exchange, a money-capital, is needed to insure the growth of boundless prosperity.

Anarchists in their financial plans offer a medium of exchange, scientifically sound and practically unlimited, free money, capital without usury or interest, a peaceful method of economic revolution.

Among the readers of Liberty are there none who can do or suggest anything which would help to spread the principles of mutualism where there is an exceptional chance of their bringing forth fruit? Has Liberty any readers in the Green Isle who can inaugurate the propaganda? May there not be found an Irish-American Anarchist with talents, means, and time to put a practical aspect on this imperfect but honestly-meant suggestion? WILLIAM BAILIE.

Class Distinctions.

Dear Mr. Tucker:

It would appear that your criticism of the New York health authorities is unjust, being based on a misapprehension of the facts. The Normannia's steerage passengers and crew were infected when the vessel reached port; the cabin passengers were *not* infected. The steerage passengers and crew were disinfected and removed to Hoffman Island, all except the sick, who were put on Swinburne Island, and a portion of the crew, who remained on board to care for the ship. Assuredly you would not have put the cabin passengers, among whom there had been no cases of cholera, on Hoffman Island, with the steerage passengers and crew, several of whose companions had died with the disease and others of whom had just been removed to the hospital on Swinburne Island? This would have, manifestly, increased the chances of an epidemic, the one thing to be guarded against.

Speaking of the steerage passengers, you say: "Yet not a word do we hear about them and their possible fate." That may be true of most New Yorkers, but here in Boston we knew several days ago that the steerage passengers were *not* "left in the thick of the danger, to die of fright if not of the pest." On the contrary, they were removed from the pest-ship long before the cabin passengers were, and put on islands, the sick on one, the well on another.

No doubt the health authorities have plenty of sins to answer for, but it seems clear that in this instance they are not guilty as charged in your indictment.

E. C. WALKER.

I stand fairly convicted of error and hasten to acknowledge it. My excuse is that I had read in two New York dailies that the steerage passengers of the Normannia were taken to Hoffman Island to be bathed and disinfected and were returned to the vessel the next day. But I apologize none the less humbly to Mr. Walker, to the health authorities, to the State, and to the readers of Liberty. Such carelessness on my part well merits the lash of satire, and I, who use that excellent weapon very freely, hope not to complain when it is justly laid across my own shoulders.

However, though I was wrong in my facts, the position which the facts were intended to illustrate remains unshaken. My purpose was to show that class distinctions abound in this country, despite the frequent proclamation by the newspaper editors that they have been abolished; and I can several times replace the instance which Mr. Walker has exploded, without going

far outside the quarantine limits within which the false instance was located.

The compulsory bathing of the steerage passengers was in itself a class distinction, unless the cabin passengers were subjected to the same rule. (Perhaps they were, but I think not; I speak cautiously, that I may not again deserve correction.) To say that the steerage passengers had been more exposed is not to the purpose. That the cabin passengers had been sufficiently exposed to make them dangerous is shown by the fact that they were kept in quarantine. Now, the virtue of a quarantine consists in its perfection. An individual not in quarantine may take such risks as he chooses, but health officers guarding the lives of millions may take no risks at all. They must extend their precautions to the minutest details. Therefore, if it was incumbent on them to bathe the steerage passengers, it was also incumbent on them to bathe the cabin passengers. In doing the one duty and failing in the other they created a class distinction.

Akin to this is another class distinction of a sanitary character, which prevails, not alone in times of epidemic, but under ordinary circumstances. One of Liberty's subscribers points me to it. I give his letter.

To the Editor of Liberty:

I can give you another instance of the distinction made between steerage and saloon passengers on the Atlantic liners.

By United States law all passengers who cannot furnish evidence of having been vaccinated have to submit to compulsory vaccination before entering port. Saloon passengers are *never* interfered with. Steerage passengers have to submit to the indignity.

Now, I came here as a saloon passenger. I am an Englishman, a speculator, a banker in a small way, and a practiser of usury, — illegal usury at that. But my blood boiled at this distinction in the treatment of rich and poor, — a distinction that could not happen in England, with all her faults.

But then I have discovered in other respects that Americans' boasting about their liberty and equality, or even legislative justice, is a stupendous sham. However, it suits me all right. I trim my sails accordingly.

Respectfully,

SALOON PASSENGER.

CALLAWAY, NEBRASKA, SEPT. 16, 1892.

Perhaps a more striking class distinction than either of the foregoing is that developed by the quarantine, not between cabin and steerage passengers, but between the clam-diggers who live in the little town of Islip and the high-tibby-bobroyals who inhabit the city of New York. Fire Island is under the jurisdiction of Islip. The State of New York purchased Fire Island with a view to placing quarantined passengers there. The citizens of Islip objected, and obtained an order from a Supreme Court judge enjoining the governor or any one else from landing any quarantined passengers on Fire Island. Nevertheless an attempt was made to land them, but the citizens of Islip assembled at the dock and prevented the landing. Subsequently a landing was effected after the injunction had been vacated on a technicality by a bench of three judges, and after calling out the military, who came near getting drowned on their way to the island. Now the citizens of Islip are taking further legal proceedings to prevent their territory from invasion by the pest. The class distinction consists in enforcing upon Islip, whose citizens are poor fishermen, an exposure to danger and disease which aristocratic and powerful New York refused to suffer. New York, which would not allow the Normannia's passengers within miles of the city, not only compelled Islip to receive them, but wildly abused the citizens of Islip as an "inhuman mob" because, acting under the authority of law, they, in defence of their health, forcibly repelled this invasion. Here is an abominable class distinction, resting on the fact that law and public opinion regard the life of an honest workman as of no consequence in comparison with that of a rich thief. Most New Yorkers steal their living; the fishermen of Islip earn theirs; hence the former should be protected from pestilence and the latter exposed to it. Such is substantially the attitude of the authorities in the present crisis. But, it is claimed, the fishermen of Islip were not afraid of the cholera; they were alarmed about their fishing interests, which were suffering seriously because of the proximity of the pest, there being no market for possibly infected fish; now men who, in the face of the plague, are governed by property considerations are selfish brutes. I do not see the force of this position. In the first place, I do not see what entitles any one to assert that these people were not actuated by fear of cholera. But even if they were not, I do not see, in the second place, why the citizen of New York who in his extremity is willing to subject innocent travellers to hardship in order to save himself and his family from cholera is any less selfish, any less inhuman, than the citizen of Islip who is willing to resort to similar measures to keep the bread from being taken from his children's mouths. And in the third place I do not see the justice in calling men who were defending themselves under the sanction of the courts a mob and in calling the governor of the State, who said that if he were the sheriff, he would land those passengers in disobedience of the injunction and take his penalty therefor, a champion of law and order. I see in all these things only a disposition to surround the rich with safeguards and to send the poor to the devil.

Have I said enough? Is the existence of class distinctions proven? Are there any fresh errors in my statements? If so, let them be pointed out. For every count in my indictment that shall be overthrown I undertake to bring two new ones that cannot be shaken. T.

"Lucifer" prints some English verses, which it credits to "Jean Richepin in Liberty." The Son of the Morning has made a mistake. Jean Richepin has written no English verses for Liberty, nor have any English verses written by Jean Richepin ever appeared in Liberty. If "Lucifer" has found any English verses by that author, it has access to sources closed to me. It certainly has found none in Liberty.

Conjugal Bliss.

"Jessie, you must not ask these people again; I will not have them come to the house."

"But I like them, Tom; Ellen is a great chum of mine; we were school-girls together."

"I can't help that. I don't like them, and that's enough."

"Then it seems this house is yours, and not ours."

"Be reasonable, you are always extreme. It is ours for all right and proper purposes."

"I will try to be reasonable, Tom, but I am so stupid, and I cannot understand. You endowed me with all your worldly goods, I thought; and this house, — was it excepted?"

"Really, Jessie, what a goose you are! That was a mere form, — a detail in the marriage service."

"Well, let us quit that just now, Tom. You admit it is ours for right and proper purposes; but you decide that for me to meet my old time-tried friends herein is not right and proper. By what authority do you become the law-maker?"

"In the first place, you vowed to obey, and in the second here is my warrant: God made man to rule over his wife."

"Oh! now I begin to see daylight, Tom. Your first point, the promise to obey, was a mere detail in the marriage service. I had forgotten it; and for the second, it is a forgery, God is obsolete. As I do not recognize him, I rebel."

"What! Jessie! How insane you are! Remember, I support this house by my earnings and will always regulate its affairs. I insist that you do not ask the Shermans again."

"I might earn as good a living as I desire if I spent my time and strength in printing or teaching, instead of in bringing forth and rearing our children and in doing the housework, etc. This is not to be taken as the equivalent of your labor?"

"No, of course not. You dear little fool, what do you do but potter about and make the house pleasant for a chap when he's tired. I'm awful glad to have you singing round and making it cosy, but — "

"You said just now 'I insist.' Supposing I also insist and ask Ellen again."

"Jessie, you make me tired. I shall turn her out neck and crop if she comes."

"Now I see completely. It is all clear, Tom. You are stronger than I am. Your right to command is only might to enforce your will. We are not equals in muscle, and I have put myself in your power. I have been for some time past suspecting ours was no marriage. I go to take lessons of Sullivan; when I return, I may be strong enough to eject Mr. Hartnell, your cousin, whose presence in this house is a continual offence to me."

"Jessie, you're enough to drive me to the devil. What are you putting on your hat for?"

"That is my concern."

"Sit down, I tell you."

"If you touch me, Tom, I shall go at some future time and not come back to you. I am wanting fresh air. I must be alone. I must think."

"Think! that is too absurd! Now, come, dear ickle sing, let's make up this silly quarrel. Your chap loves his wee wife."

"It's no quarrel. I have not been angry, and besides it is too cold and sad a fact to fall out over. The truth begins to show me that what I thought was gold is only brass. I am a slave. I, who am your acknowledged equal in learning and accomplishments, failing the muscle, have to knuckle under, deceive you, or go. Which of the three ways, the two first so well-worn, the third so lonesome, thorny, and untried, I take, remains to be proved, but — "

Exit Tom banging the door and whistling "Yankee Doodle." MIRIAM DANIELL.

Enthusiasm and Judgment.

The following, from the Philadelphia "Ledger," is interesting as an impartial presentation of the two views of enthusiasm that have recently been given expression in Liberty:

There is always a spice of exaggeration in enthusiasm. It is no use to quarrel with this; it is a necessary element. He who sees vividly and feels intensely upon any subject is at present unprepared to view its difficulties, its obstacles, its other side. Could he do this, it would lessen his zeal and diminish his efforts. He must be, in a measure, one-sided; he must present his cause in strong colors, and, perhaps, overestimate its importance or its practicability. This will not be done consciously, for sincerity is the very core of enthusiasm. He will be fully convinced, not only of the truth of his convictions, but that they contain the whole truth, and in proportion to his power, he will persuade others of the same. Indeed, nothing is more sure of a temporary success than this enthusiastic one-sidedness when wielded by ability. It is the eager reformer, who sees no objections to his schemes, who wins popular sympathy. It is the lawyer or orator, pleading for-

cibly and without the least incertitude, who carries his hearers with him. It is the inventor, whose enthusiasm is unchecked by a single doubt, who will inspire confidence. And the man of action in any department will usually command success largely in proportion to his boldness, courage, and assurance. People are too much absorbed in their own affairs to wish to meditate deeply on the pros and cons of another matter; life is too short, and power is too limited, for much weighing and discriminating, and they are glad to share the enthusiastic certainty of one who is supposed to be an adequate judge. One side of a subject, presented with force and clearness, commands assent, and it is thus that parties and sects flourish so rapidly under vigorous leaders.

This enthusiasm, however, is properly a characteristic of youth and early manhood. It is beautiful in its abandon, in its candor, in its untroubled assurance. Its ring is true, — though but half the truth may be presented, — for it is strong in its straightforward simplicity. But as the years roll on, this intense enthusiasm fades away, and in all well-developed natures it is replaced by a sounder judgment and larger vision. Then the flaws, objections, and difficulties, before unseen, come gradually into view. That full fervor of feeling and assurance which youth enjoyed has departed, and calmly and quietly, but firmly and forcibly, reason asserts her sway. The influence of the former inspiration never wholly departs, but it is now tempered with a moderation which comes of larger experience and deeper knowledge. The claims of justice are better understood, and the means of arriving at it become more abundant. There is less confident certainty, but better grounds on which to build it.

This transition is never sudden, never even speedy; it is the slow and gradual development of the superior man. Many there are who never attain to it. Losing whatever enthusiasm they may have had, they only gain in its place a rigid and bigoted adherence to their former views. Or they may be fickle and changeable, without any adequate reason for their changes. But in the good and great man the noble enthusiasm of early life is mellowed and tempered by the reason and judgment of later years, and the result is invaluable. Both conditions are good, both natural, neither should be depreciated; they are the marks of the finest type of man, the one in his youth, the other in maturity.

Often the natural promotion of the individual to a more responsible position will illustrate the value of this gradual development. On the other hand, the failures of men in middle life may often be traced to the absence of this development. There are many who give fair promise in youth which is never fulfilled. Their eagerness, zeal, and power seemed to foretell a greatness which has never come. They have progressed to a certain point, and then stood still. They have, perhaps, done a few fine things, and then are heard of no more. The fire of youth and enthusiasm has burned out and left only ashes. Had the judgment and reason of maturity and the power and dignity of age succeeded to the zeal and fervor of youth, they might have retained their prestige and carried on their usefulness to greater and greater perfection.

A Ballad of the Great London Plague.

"Bring out your dead!
Dead, dead, your dead!"
The one scared passer-by has fled
Heart-sick with dread.
"Bring out your dead!"

"Bring out your dead!
Dead, dead, your dead!"
"Stay not to smooth them, it will spread
Black death," they said.
"Bring out your dead!"

"Bring out your dead!
Dead, dead, your dead!"
It cannot wait, the cart has sped.
"Thank God!" she said,
And kissed her dead.

"Bring out your dead!
Dead, dead, your dead!"
"When it comes round again," she said,
"May I be dead!
I hear Death's tread."

Faint grew it, "Dead,
Dead, dead, your dead!"
Upon his heart she laid her head.
"My God!" she said,
"He is *not* dead."

Miriam Daniell.

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